HEY TEENS!
TAKE CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

STAY WELL
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CHECK IN WITH HOW YOU ARE FEELING

It is understandable to feel sad, disappointed, frustrated, or anxious. Especially if you have mental health challenges, the stress of living through COVID-19 can make these feelings even more overwhelming. Because of the pandemic, you may feel like your time was cut short with events and activities you had planned. Give yourself time to feel sad. Now that you can spend time in public and with friends and family, it is also normal to feel anxious about keeping safe.

KEEP YOURSELF HEALTHY

Self-care is important to keep your mind and body healthy. Mix things up and find different ways to manage stress and stay active. Try keeping a gratitude journal, take an online exercise class, practice mindfulness and meditation, or create art. Get creative and find ways to hang out virtually — stream an online concert with friends, host a virtual movie or game night, or even video chat while studying or eating lunch. When hanging out in person with friends or family, remember: not everyone is vaccinated against COVID-19. Keep a face mask handy.

CONSIDER WHAT YOU HAVE CONTROL OVER

With all the changes, it can feel like things are out of control. Routines and schedules help build a sense of control and keep you healthy. Mapping out your day, like when to sleep or wake up and when to exercise or have time for fun, can really help improve your mood. It may be a pain to get started, but creating healthy habits (even small ones), help if you're struggling with mental health challenges!

TRY SOMETHING NEW

Why not try something new you have been wanting to do, but haven't had time?

Try meditation or a simple mindfulness activity.

Create a COVID-19 time capsule to have memories to look back on.

Do something every day to create a kinder world with this monthly activity calendar.

Watch nature or animal cameras.

Take a virtual museum or college tour.

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FOCUS ON WHAT IS GOING WELL

If you're starting to feel down, practice mindfulness and think about positive things in your life. What do you appreciate right now? These can be little things, like having more time to watch a favorite TV show or enjoying the fresh air while on a walk. Taking time to reflect on what is going well can help shift your mood and your feelings may follow. Mindfulness activities encourage healthy reflection.

UNPLUG FROM TECHNOLOGY AND CREATE NEW MEMORIES

It can be challenging to manage your emotions if you're always on social media. You may not realize it, but the added screen time and exposure to negative news can affect mental health. Be intentional with tech time and practice some boundaries around when to use it.

Take a break from technology and try a fun individual or family activity, like reading, board games, cards, puzzles, fort building, or craft projects. These activities can build great memories for you, your friends, and loved ones. Try to find time each day to get outside as well, even if it is just for a walk. It helps to physically get away from technology too.

FEELING DOWN? GET HELP IF YOU NEED IT

We all need a little help sometimes. If you are feeling sad, afraid or overwhelmed, talk to someone you trust—whether it is a family member, close friend, therapist, or case manager. It is important to reach out for help if you need it.

Help is available 24/7 for free.
For emotional support any time, dial or text 988 to reach a crisis counselor.

LGBTQ teens might be feeling extra stress during this time. Check out tips for LGBTQ youth and young adults if you are struggling.

LIVING IN THE NEW NORMAL

Things have changed. We know a lot more about COVID- 19, which means we know better how to stay careful and healthy:

- Get a COVID-19 vaccine if you haven't already.

- If you feel sick, stay home and away from others. Test yourself for COVID-19.

- When you go out, take a face mask with you. Some businesses and events still require them.

- Don't be afraid to mask up if you feel uncomfortable in crowds. It's your decision.